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AND REASON

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [MR](#)  
SUBJECT: IT'S OFFICIAL -- CONSTITUTIONAL COUNCIL CONFIRMS  
AZIZ' ELECTION VICTORY

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR FOR REASONS 1.4 (B & D).

¶1. (U) The Mauritanian Constitutional Council on July 23 issued its ruling ratifying the results of Mauritania's July 18 presidential elections definitively establishing General Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz as president elect. Prior to ratifying the election, the Constitutional Council addressed the complaints filed by candidates Ould Daddah, Ould Boulkheir and Ould Mohamed Vall. Citing the statements of the Ministry of Interior, the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI), and other election observers, the Council dismissed the complaints filed by Ould Daddah and Ould Vall as being general denunciations without material evidence of irregularities. Ould Mohamed Vall's complaint was dismissed for an unspecified error in how it was filed. The Mauritanian Constitution provides for no appeal of the decisions made by the Constitutional Council meaning that the electoral process is now officially concluded.

¶2. (U) Also on June 23, the President of the CENI, Sid'Ahmed Ould Dey, tendered his resignation to the Prime Minister. He issued a statement saying, "Having observed with many others that the presidential elections of July 18 had proceeded normally in a technical sense, the complaints that I received as well as the substance of the appeals presented to the Constitutional Council, had planted a seed of doubt in my spirit concerning the reliability of the elections on a fundamental level. For that reason and to not be in contradiction with my conscience, I have decided to resign my presidency of the CENI."

¶3. (SBU) With the election results now certified and final, Mission strongly recommends that the Department issue a statement recognizing President-Elect Aziz' victory. We note that others such as the French and United Nations have followed the U.S. lead in reserving a final statement until the decision of the Constitutional Council. With that decision now in hand, we expect multiple international statements. The absence of a U.S. statement would be noted and complicate the return to normal relations with the Mauritanian Government. Post recommends a statement along the following lines:

The United States notes the definitive decision of Mauritania's Constitutional Council declaring that Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz has been elected president. Despite a certain number of irregularities, the Constitutional Council, like international observers, has determined that the presidential elections of July 18 reflected the general will of the Mauritanian people. We congratulate former General Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz on his victory and look forward to working with his government on the multiple challenges facing his country. The Dakar Accord succeeded in building the necessary basis of national consensus to return Mauritania to constitutional legitimacy and afforded the Mauritanian people the opportunity to freely choose their own leader. We call on President-Elect Aziz as well as all of Mauritania's political leaders to continue to work together constructively and respectfully in the interests of their people.

14. (C) In it certainly too early to read the nature of the new Aziz government but the General has, up to now, acted responsibly and said the right things about being the "President of ALL Mauritians" and suggesting that some opposition ministers in the Government of National Unity may carry over into his next government. It is also suggested that he will work with the FNDD's Messaoud Ould Boulkheir as the "Leader of the Opposition" (a formal cabinet-rank position in Mauritania and as President of the National Assembly. The hand appears to be extended, even as Ould Boulkheir and Ould Daddah continue to denounce the election results. A correct and encouraging U.S. statement may help cement the positive tendencies we are seeing. Department may also wish to prepare a letter of congratulations to President-Elect Aziz.

15. (C) The Ambassador will seek a courtesy call on the President-Elect on Saturday, July 25.  
BOULWARE